

for focusing the beams 5, 7 are formed as lenses. The device 1 according to the invention is connected over a bidirectional data bus 9 to a superordinate control unit (not shown) in the vehicle 10.

In the claims:

Please add the following new claims:

14. (New) The device of claim 1 wherein the control unit is operably associated with a windshield cleaning system of the vehicle such that the windshield cleaning system is activated when the control unit detects dirt on the windshield.

15. (New) The device of claim 1 wherein the photodetector further comprises:

a CCD image converter.

16. (New) The device of claim 2 wherein the light emitting diode is operable to emit optical rays having different wavelengths.

17. (New) The device of claim 2 wherein the light emitting diode is operable to emit optical rays having different intensities.

18. (New) The device of claim 11 wherein the light emitting diode is positioned such that the optical rays strike the windshield at a similar angle with respect to a driver's line of sight.